

# Pembridge Association NEWSLETTER

Number 14 Summer 1982

## Through the Porches

*Eileen Brading*

The Pembridge Estate, alongside its neighbour Ladbroke, appears from the air, as planned and as magnificent as the City of Bath. The houses on the Estate can be grand and Italianate, as in the Square, or similar and equally fine as in the surrounding Crescents and Terraces. Nearly all share a common heritage of fine stucco and ironwork, with Cornices and Canopies, Columns and Capitals all enhanced by trees and gardens.

If we destroy one feature of one house per day, at the end of this century this fine example of English Architecture will have gone for ever. So, whether you are an owner or a tenant of a period house, you carry quite a responsibility.

Many mistakes are made, cornices are removed, windows with pretty and well-proportioned glazing bars are replaced, but worst of all beautiful doorways are destroyed.

Your front door may be a simple or an ornate one, but it is decorated with architraves, columns and pediments, and above all, a fanlight. You may also still have a decorative bell and a boot-scraper.

The door itself may be single or double opening, may have bold mouldings on its panels or the simpler linenfold; above, the fanlight may be plain glass, or have delightful glazing bars.

Take a look at the house you live in. Has some uncaring person given it an "off the peg" varnished door with a mock fanlight echoing the finer one above? It will no doubt look like a face with two sets of eyes if this is so.

We agree that you will need expert advice before undertaking restoration of stucco and ironwork, but a period door can be lovingly restored or copied by a craftsman carpenter, or by one of the firms specialising in period architecture. Usually there is at least one house in a street with an original doorway to copy.

Traditional doors of this period were painted with a glossy paint, often black, but most people agree that a little licence with colour is very welcome. Door furniture was mainly brass, design and proportion again being important.

Now take a good look and start with the door. You

will give great pleasure to yourself at every homecoming, and to all those who pass by. Next, you work your way through the stucco and the ironwork, and at the end you will possess a gem of the past.

## Garden Party

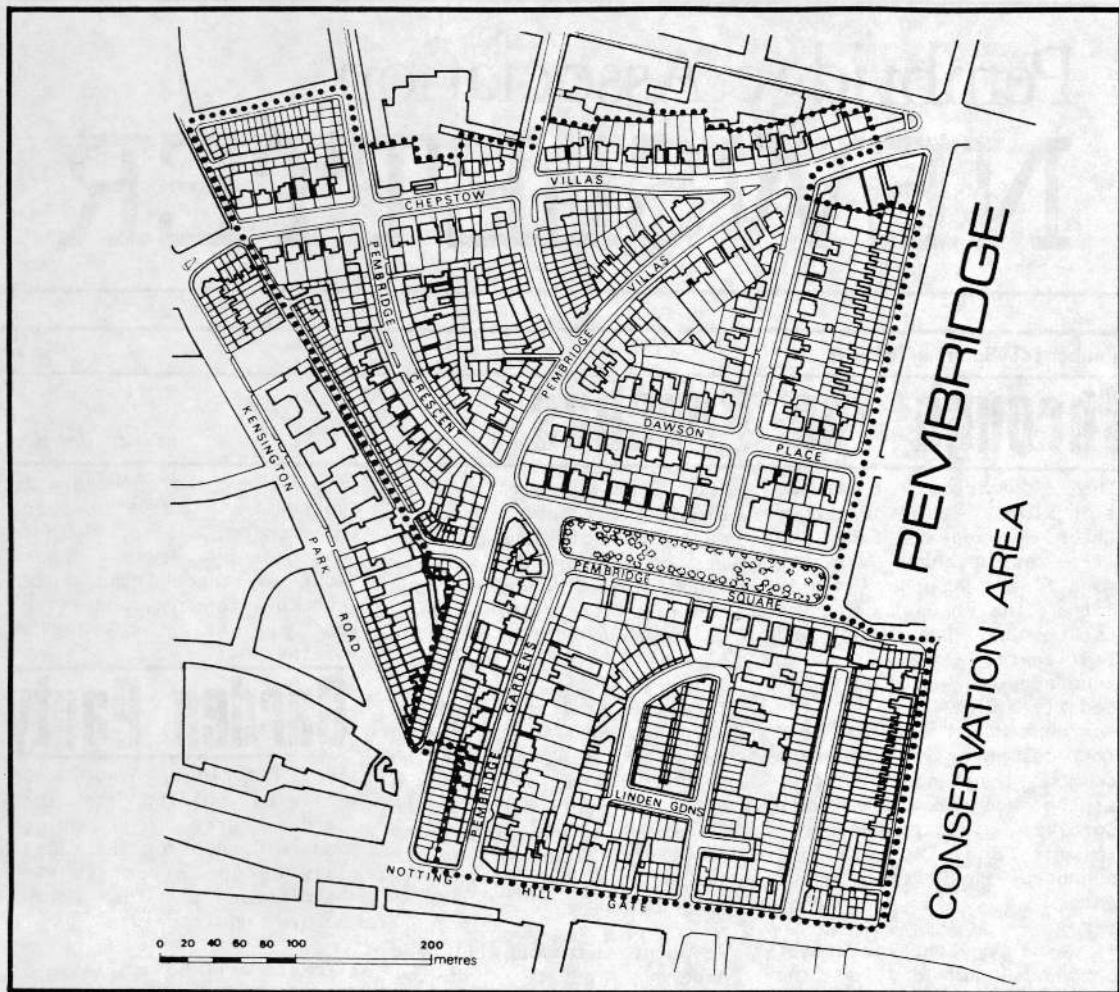
The Pembridge Association will be holding its 1982 Garden Party in Pembridge Square Gardens on Saturday 17 July at 6pm - 8pm (by kind permission of the Garden Square Committee).

Tickets will be available at the North West Gate into the Garden on the day at £ 1.50 per person, which will include one free full glass of wine and eats during the evening; extra glasses of wine will be 50p each.

In past years many local residents attending the Garden Party have expressed their delight at the great opportunity to meet other people living in the area who they might not otherwise have come across.

Non-Members of the Association are welcome to join the Party to support the Pembridge Association.

**17 JULY 1982**



## From The Chairman's Desk

David Campion

The effectiveness of a conservation society is determined primarily by the interest and action of its membership; in practice, of course, the lead has to be taken by the elected officers and the Executive Committee. We therefore welcome a number of new faces onto the Committee and hope that they can add new life to the Association.

The primary channel of communication between the Executive Committee and the Membership is through this Newsletter and at the A.G.M. and other meetings during the year.

We have, at present, given up the idea of the Annual Lecture because of lack of support in recent years; may be this reflects the lack of any apparent issue of major importance.

However, this year we are continuing the tradition of the annual Garden Party in Pembridge Square - an event that has always been much appreciated in the past with a regular attendance of over one hundred local people. We have always welcomed non-members to attend in the hope that they will join the Association and support our aims as set out on the back page of this Newsletter.

However, just as important, is the opportunity that the Garden Party gives for a very pleasant social occasion, where new friendships have been made on past occasions, and the chance for local residents to discuss matters of local interest.

This year views will be welcomed on the aim of the Gardens Square Committee to provide new railings around the Square and the aim of the Pembridge Association to promote the enhancement of the front garden walls along the South side of Pembridge Square.

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# Kossuth

## THE REVOLUTIONARY OF CHEPSTOW VILLAS

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No.39 Chepstow Villas was once the home of one of the great revolutionaries of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Lajos Kossuth, whose residence in the house is commemorated by a plaque, was born of a Hungarian minor noble family in the small market town of Zemplin in 1802; he died in Turin after nearly half a century spent in exile at the great age of 92.

His revolutionary career began in journalism, where he made a name for himself as editor of a newspaper supporting extreme radicalism and extreme nationalism. His anti-Austrian activities were rewarded with a sentence of four years in jail, of which he served three. On his release from prison he persisted in his resistance to Austrian control of the government of Hungary and in 1847 he was elected a member of the Hungarian Parliament. His extremism in demanding independence from the control of the Emperor Franz Joseph, who also held the title of King of Hungary, won him popular support and in 1848 he was appointed Finance Minister in Budapest.

His greatest moment was achieved in the same year when he succeeded in extracting from the Emperor the 'March Laws' that gave Hungary a new Constitution, a new Parliament and quasi-independence of Austria.

These concessions were not, however, enough for Kossuth who drove the Emperor to military action by a speech in July 1848, of which a picturesque account survives - "he entered the chamber, supported by his friends, haggard, deathly pale, his

eyes on fire...he dragged himself to the rostrum...and then spoke for an hour in a loud voice that reached a crescendo".

War broke out, but the hastily organised Hungarian army was no match for the Austrians, particularly when the Russians came in to help suppress the revolution.

Kossuth proved quite incompetent as a leader; he stabbed his ablest commanders in the back and had a bitter quarrel with Gorgey, the best of them, who had realised that a small divided nation could not hope to hold out against the joint forces of Russia and Austria.

In 1849 Kossuth fled his country and sought refuge in Turkey; after various revolutions in 1848, which had disturbed the European scene, no country was eager to receive him, but in 1851 he was admitted to England.

The rest of his life was devoted to trying to collect funds for a new movement of liberation in Hungary; he even visited America and spoke in the Senate in the effort to obtain support.

In 1869, following upon the establishment of a new constitutional relationship between Austria and Hungary, he was given the opportunity to return home but declined.

In spite of his chequered career he is still regarded as a hero in his country, but in the years of my residence in Chepstow Villas, I have not as yet seen any Hungarian delegation come to pay respects before his erstwhile home.

*Dr. John F Hayward*

## 21 Pembridge Cresc.

How pleasant it is to see the rehabilitation work proceeding on what has been an eyesore for far too long. All of us must surely welcome the fact that the Council is taking a responsible attitude in replacing the destroyed decorative features of the facade so that, once again, it matches those of its neighbours. What a good example this is to other owners and developers.

## Sion Convent

The Executive Committee is delighted to see at last the resolution of the long saga of Sion Convent; it is currently undergoing conversion into flats for sale.

We are all also delighted with the rehabilitation work carried out by Wiggans Homes on the adjoining houses in Denbigh Road which have for many years been threatened with demolition as being uneconomic to rehabilitate.

## Policy Statement

The Council's Planning Committee has now approved the Pembridge Conservation Area Policy Statement, which is currently being printed, and is due to be available in its final form later this year.

The Association took an active part in collaboration with Mr. Richard Godwin, of the Planning Department, in the preparation of this Policy Statement.

The aim of the Policy Statement is to provide a Guide to house owners, would-be house owners and developers as to the form of development or redevelopment which would be acceptable in the area; in addition, and more importantly, it spells out the changes that would be unsupported and unacceptable in the area.



# Committee ≈ 1982

CHAIRMAN: Councillor David Campion  
 13 Rodney House, W 11  
 HON. SECRETARY: Dr. John Hayward  
 28 Chepstow Villas, W 11  
 HON. TREASURER: Mr. Tim de Zoete  
 33 Pembridge Villas, W 11

*Committee:*  
 Miss Eileen Brading 16 Denbigh Terrace, W11  
 Mr. Robert Carnwath 2 Chepstow Place, W2  
 Mrs. Joan Floyd 10 Pembridge Crescent, W11  
 Mr. David Hales 3 Dawson Place, W2  
 Mr. Michael Harlock Vincent House, W2  
 Mrs. Selena Hart 20 Portobello Road, W11  
 Mrs. Judith Hillelson 34 Chepstow Place, W2  
 Mr. Niall McMahon 23 Chepstow Villas, W11  
 Dr. Helen Stacey 21 Chepstow Villas, W11  
 Mr. Colin Strong 24 Chepstow Villas, W11  
 Miss Jan Wright 15 Rodney House, W11

*Co-opted:*  
 Mr. Richard Bird 70 Portobello Road, W11  
 Mr. Martin Strickland Vincent House, W2

*Ex-Officio:*  
 Councillor Sir Anthony Coates 135 Gloucester Road, SW7  
 Councillor Miss Doreen Weatherhead  
 13 Clanricarde Gardens, W2

## subscriptions

If you would like to join the Pembridge Association and support it in its efforts in maintaining the high standards of architecture in the area and improving the quality of life in general, just fill in the bankers order form and send it to the treasurer, T. de Zoete, 33, Pembridge Villas, London W11.

If you prefer to pay your subscription by cheque, make it payable to the Pembridge Association - minimum annual subscription is £1.

To: The Manager.....(Bank)

(address).....

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Please pay £.....( pound(s)) to the

Pembridge Association, account number 13467221,

Williams & Glyn's Bank Ltd., 78 Notting Hill

Gate, London W11 (sorting code 16-00-82) on

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 Editor: Jan Wright. Typing, Artwork & Layout: David Campion.

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ST PETER'S HALL 59A PORTOBELLO RD 8.00 PM

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY 9th  
 DECEMBER 1982

THE AIMS OF THE PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

When the Association was founded its aims were set out in its constitution as follows:

1. to encourage and promote high standards of architecture and town planning within the Pembridge Estate Conservation Area
2. to stimulate and promote public interest and care for the beauty, history and character of the neighbourhood
3. to encourage the preservation, conservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest within or affecting the neighbourhood.

These aims were to be pursued by charitable means only and the Association was to form no affiliation with any political party. Membership is open to any person interested in the aims of the Association.